

ALISON: We're cold. *(He looks at her.)* But we're hunting. We are. You want to shoot something. We will. It's all good. I'm sure some ugly rat or something will wander by eventually, why don't you shoot that instead?

TYLER: I have a better idea. *(He raises his gun.)*

ALISON: *(She giggles and pushes his gun down.)* You're funny. You know, I'm really hungry anyway. Why don't we go back to the cabin and have a hot mug of cider and something yummy to eat? We can refuel. Come back here and have more fun after we shop in town a while. I'm sure they'll be some mean-looking nasty deer out here later.

TYLER: Alison, I am going to kill something before we leave today.

ALISON: Sure you will, honey, but no Bambis, Rudolphs, or Easter Bunnies. Or any of their friends. Anyway, I'm so glad you invited me along. I really understand why you like this so much. It's peaceful out here. All these cute animals around. I like hunting. I'm going to come with you as much as I can. Isn't that great?

TYLER: *(Beat.)* Run!

ALISON: *(Beat.)* Umm . . . OK, race you there. *(Running, singing.)* "The hills are alive with the sound . . ."

HOUSING TO SHARE

Dorrine, late twenties, and Cal, early twenties, have both gone to a roommate agency to find their perfect match. Dorrine is trying to find a roommate to fit her present apartment. The only problem is that she has control issues, which have driven three roommates away in the past year. Cal is laid-back, but a bit irresponsible. He is trying to find a place where he won't be shot at again and where the roommate is willing to, at least, pay rent regularly. Today, they are explaining their potential wants to Cheryl at the agency. At the beginning of the scene, they are speaking to the offstage agent, not to each other.

CHARACTERS

Dorrine: late 20s, in search of a roommate

Cal: early 20s, potential roommate

SETTING

Dorrine's apartment

TIME

The present

DORRINE: *(To audience.)* I jotted down a few notes to help you help me, Cheryl. Let's start with age. I'm looking for a female roommate who is approximately twenty-six to thirty-two years —

CAL: *(To audience.)* I got a couple of IDs here that'll say I'm anywhere from twenty-one to twenty-five.

DORRINE: I think new-to-the-city, sociable, but not too sociable. Female. Definitely female.

CAL: Sex? *(Grin.)* Well, I uh . . . *(Realizes.)* Oh? You mean like male or female?

DORRINE: Well educated is important.

CAL: Hey, I was gonna finish college, but it was, like, a lot of work.

DORRINE: No excess drinkers, partyers, and *definitely* not a smoker.

CAL: I'm real picky on that. On smoking, I want my roommate to use an ashtray. Ya really got to, ya know? Because I almost burned my place down once. *(Beat.)* What? Not recently!

DORRINE: I'm looking for a real professional, making mid-thirties or so.

CAL: Employment? Yeah, I've got a couple jobs.

DORRINE: And I will accept the occasional vegetarian if there are no curry smells that turn my place into an Ethiopian armpit.

CAL: I always cook with loads of garlic and curry. But that's not a good thing to do if you're tired, and hungover, and without a lid. I found that out.

DORRINE: Also, Cheryl, I prefer no bike messengers, aerobics instructors, dog walkers, or gothic magicians. Don't ask. I don't want to go into it. Oh, and absolutely no actors!

CAL: Yeah, I'm an actor.

DORRINE: Someone who can carry on an intelligent conversation, well-read, and well-traveled.

CAL: Yeah, uh, someone who pays rent is probably good.

DORRINE: I find it's best if they have no car, no pets, and no boyfriend.

CAL: I mean, they don't have to pay it on the first, but it probably would be good if it's like within the first week or so. I mean, believe me, I've been late with rent. Who isn't? *(Beat.)* Not *real* late. What are you writing down?

DORRINE: And uses coasters. Can't anyone use a coaster when they're right there and available?

CAL: And not paying rent, that's . . . that's like bad.

DORRINE: Oh. And finally, they should love my cat, Modesty Blaze. *(Beat.)* Yes, I said no pets. But that's no pets for them.

I have an existing pet in our home. So therefore, they should love Modesty if they want to live here.

CAL: Oh, yeah, Cher, and I majorly love cats. I really, really dig 'em.

Scene change: Dorrine and Cal are now in Dorrine's apartment. Dorrine is interviewing Cal as a potential — and potentially disastrous — roommate.

DORRINE: *(Turns to Cal.)* Cats?

CAL: *(To Dorrine.)* Yeah. Cheryl at the agency said you had cats. Where are they?

DORRINE: I think there's been some sort of a mix-up here, Cal. I don't have cats. I have *a* cat.

CAL: Oh. OK. Well, where's the cat then?

DORRINE: Let's wait on that. She not friendly at first anyway. Besides, we've got a problem.

CAL: Problem? Is she OK? What are you feeding her these days?

DORRINE: It's not my cat. The problem is that you're not a female. I requested a female.

CAL: Oh gee, well if you're gonna be picky.

DORRINE: I don't know how this happened. Cheryl is wasting our time.

CAL: No. I don't mind that you're a woman. In fact, I like it. And I love your doorbell, Dorrine, and this room. I have a good feeling about the walls. Ya know when that happens, it happens. You can't force these things.

DORRINE: Yes, but this is a real problem *for me*. You not being a female.

CAL: Well, there was that short period where I liked shaving my legs. I could complain about my weigh periodically, would that help?

DORRINE: *(Beat.)* I'm gonna go ahead and call Cheryl.

CAL: Now wait. I was kidding. Hold up. I'm a very cool guy. Don't you want to know more about me?

DORRINE: *(Beat.)* No.

CAL: I love animals. I work at the shelter on Mack.
DORRINE: See. Now that's another thing. I explicitly said that I didn't want a dog walker.
CAL: Dog walker? Who said anything about a dog walker? I'm not a dog walker. I'm an animal caretaker. See? There's a difference. *(Beat.)* Besides, I thought you wanted someone who liked your cat — who liked animals?
DORRINE: Of course. But I don't want them bringing home fleas and other sick diseases to my little Modesty Blaze.
CAL: Modesty Blaze? What a cool name. I bet she's a little, cutie, scrunchy, sweetie cat.
DORRINE: Oh, yeah, she is. She's a snuggly wuggly baby cat. *(Beat.)* Now about your wrong job.
CAL: That's just part-time really. And I always wash. I have a real job. I'm an actor.
DORRINE: An actor?! You're an actor?
CAL: Yeah, but I'm not big-headed or anything. I just do a couple of steady gigs as an actor that bring in the cash.
DORRINE: Cash? Actor? Same sentence? Something's wrong.
CAL: Yeah, I play Banana Man and Bob the Bear for a balloon delivery service. I'm considered their best — their top. Can you believe it? Get this. I never even had one acting class. Never. *(Beat.)* You got a cig on ya?
DORRINE: Oh God, you smoke too?!
CAL: Hey, you too? Cool! But listen, you have to use an ash-tray. I'm picky about that.
DORRINE: No, no you misunderstand me. I don't smoke. At all!
CAL: Oh. So why did you say you did? Honesty's the best policy.
DORRINE: I didn't say I did! In fact, I don't allow smoking in my place under any circumstance!
CAL: Ohhh, quit recently, huh? Yeah, I've done that a couple of times. Gets ya cranky. But I can see why you don't like people smokin' here. The walls are so white, no cracks or peeling like my last place. Don't get me wrong. I loved my

last place. Really big. Loved my roommate. I woulda stayed there forever if he hadn't shot at me.
DORRINE: *(Beat.)* Shot at you? With a gun?
CAL: Yeeahh. *(Her face is full of fear.)* Oh no, it's cool. He didn't mean to or anything. I was just breaking in the window and he mistook me for a burglar. No biggie.
DORRINE: Ya know, it's getting kinda late.
CAL: I forgot my keys. That's why I was breaking in. And he fired — the gun. It woulda been totally cool. 'Cause he didn't hit me, but he did kinda shatter the neighbors' stained glass window, so the neighbor sued. And Robby was kinda weird about me ever after, which is cool because I didn't like the mice there anyway.
DORRINE: Mice?
CAL: Yeah, one night I woke up and one of them was running across my face. That was it. They have diseases, ya know? Yeah, that's exactly why it's good we'll have a cat here.
DORRINE: We'll?
CAL: This is going to be much better. How are the roaches here?
DORRINE: Oh — kay. You are not moving in here. I mean — no offense, but — we — there is no *we* here.
CAL: But I thought Cheryl said we were a match.
DORRINE: I don't care what Cheryl said. Cheryl is an imbecile. Cheryl could die for all I care!
CAL: Wow! That's sorta harsh. You having a bad day, huh?
DORRINE: A bad day? Try a bad year. I've gone through three roommates.
CAL: Yeah, me too — totally kicked out! *(Beat.)* Not that I didn't want to leave.
DORRINE: I haven't been difficult. I haven't. But my therapist thinks that —
CAL: Hey, don't worry. Relax. I lived with crazy people before.
DORRINE: I'm not crazy! I'm not saying I'm crazy!
CAL: Yeah, uh-huh, that's what all crazy people say. What drugs are you on?

DORRINE: I . . . uh . . . I — I — can't believe this! All I was saying was that my therapist —

CAL: I think therapy's good. So what drugs *are* you on?

DORRINE: I am not on drugs! I'm on — medication! There's a difference. I'm a nervous person. And nervous people need quiet roommates. I want someone calm and quiet this time.

CAL: Well, I'm quiet. And jeez, the band would only play once or twice a week.

DORRINE: *(Beat. Face drops.)* The band?

CAL: Oh, didn't Cheryl mention it? We're the Cool Cats. Heard of us?

DORRINE: *(Beat.)* My therapist has advised me that it's OK that I have some control issues. Some people have control issues and are, therefore, very particular about some things. One of those things, for me, is roommates. And you would not be good.

CAL: Aww, I just saw your little baby peek her little head around the corner. She's long-haired? *(He coaxes the kitty from the hiding place. Whispering to the kitty.)*

DORRINE: Yes. She is. *(She watches. He still coos at the cat.)* That's odd. She usually hisses at new people. *(Looking. Excited.)* Aww, she's looking at you! Look at her little, teeny — *(Stops.)* Wait a minute. Stop trying to distract me. I was making a point. The point is my therapist says I obviously need control.

CAL: Well, humm, as Dr. Phil says — lost three roomies. How has that been working for you?

DORRINE: Uh, ya know, I don't like you. And beyond that, you are not what I requested. You are not female. You're an actor. You smoke. You're in a band. You were shot at. And small rodents crawl across your face at night.

CAL: Well, is that my fault?!

DORRINE: *(Yelling.)* My point is that you are not calm!!!! *(Breathes heavily to relax.)*

CAL: You know what I think? *(She shakes her head no.)* I think the universe brings certain energies together. Sometimes in

a way that doesn't make complete sense to anyone. But these different kinds of energies benefit from bouncing off one another . . . and they blend together to form like this positive . . . blended thing — like those yummy blended frozen fruity drinks that create . . . *(Waving arms to think of word.)* energy. Don't you think?

DORRINE: No, I think someone f'd up at the agency. Maybe they spilled a fruity drink on our applications and they stuck together. That's about the closest this has anything to do with yummy blended frozen fruity drinks. And I refuse to pay that roommate service fee because you are the antithesis of what I asked for!

CAL: The antithesis?! Really? Wow! *(Beat.)* What does that mean exactly?

DORRINE: The opposite! You're the opposite of what I want!!

CAL: Well, um that's a good thing. You know uh . . . Yin and Yang. Peanut butter and jelly. Fred and Barney. *(Looks at her.)* Wilma. Fred and Wilma. *(Beat.)* The point is what's so wrong with me, huh? Besides being an actor, smoker, band person who was shot at? I'm a nice guy, right?

DORRINE: Well . . . well I know for a fact that you wouldn't do a revolving chore wheel with me.

CAL: A what?

DORRINE: A revolving chore wheel. It's color coded? It revolves around revealing certain chores around the apartment. Each person is assigned a different color chore in a month cycle. I know you would refuse.

CAL: *(Sincerely interested.)* Oh wow! Cool! Very organized. I like it!

DORRINE: *(Beat.)* You do? It's driven others away. They think it's anal.

CAL: I don't. I love things that are color coded and alphabetical. You think the chore wheel is anal? I had a roommate who organized the cupboard according to food groups. Isn't that completely nuts?

DORRINE: Nuts? Yes, well, I think *nuts* is a very strong word for that.

CAL: Oh wow, you do that? I love that!

DORRINE: But you just said that was completely —

CAL: Shhh. (*Puts his fingers over his lips.*) Look. (*Points to cat.*) She's so friendly.

DORRINE: Oh my God. She's never done that with anyone. (*Shocked.*) Modesty Blaze? Behave yourself.

CAL: I think she likes me, huh?

DORRINE: Well, she certainly seems to like your . . . your muscular leg.

CAL: I didn't say this but I think organizing according to food groups is sexy in a way.

DORRINE: You do?

CAL: Shhh!

DORRINE: (*Whispering.*) So you don't really think it's nuts?

CAL: (*Whispers.*) No, I think it's totally nuts — but in a sexy way. (*Looking down.*) You're kitty seems to like me, isn't that something?

DORRINE: Yes, I, I noticed that, but, but what about my control issues and your rodent problem?

CAL: So you have control issues? Works for me. I'm all about lack of control. You're so tense, Dorrine. Let me help you. (*Massaging her shoulders.*)

DORRINE: Mmmmm. (*Pointing to her shoulder.*) Right there, will ya? (*He moves to that spot.*) Ooh. Ahh. Mmm. Uh — Ooh — that's good.

CAL: You were saying?

DORRINE: (*Moving her shoulder up.*) What? (*Laughs.*) Ha, ha, ha. (*Beat.*) Um, when do you move in?

THE PINNACLE

Liz, thirty, and Lincoln, twenty-eight, have been dating for two years now. They met right after law school when they both got jobs working for the Justice Department. The two lawyers are opposites in some respects: Liz is casual, unabashed, and free-spoken; Lincoln is formal, humble, and reserved. Lincoln has planned a lovely getaway to Italy for the two of them. They are currently staying in a hotel in Tuscany. For several months, Lincoln has been planning to ask Liz to marry him, but he wanted a proper setting in which to ask. The only problem is that Lincoln has lost the engagement ring. He suspects the hotel maid of stealing it, so he's been complaining to the management and obsessed with trying to locate this maid. Liz, not knowing his plan, is feeling hurt and fiercely angry because Lincoln has been ignoring her throughout the entire vacation. He is constantly talking to his friends in the nearby villa and acting like an idiot. In this scene, Lincoln has taken Liz to a romantic Italian restaurant to pop the question. Liz wants to break up with him.

CHARACTERS

Liz: 30

Lincoln: 28, Liz's boyfriend

SETTING

A restaurant in Italy

TIME

The present

LINCOLN: He said he gave away our reservation because we were late. I'm really sorry, Liz.

LIZ: Great. Fine. Let's go someplace else then.